



Ludwig von Mises and Libertarian Organisations : Strategic Lessons

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Résumé en anglais The most important vehicle through which Ludwig von Mises spread his ideas was his writings. But his impact was also leveraged through personal association with like-minded people in various private networks and organizations. The present paper highlights the more general significance of Mises' personal experience, by putting it into a wider historical context. We argue that it was no accident that his influence was amplified through private rather than public organizations. The emergence of influential libertarian organizations such as the Foundation for Economic Education and the Mont Pèlerin Society can be interpreted as a belated "free-market" reaction to increased government control of economic science during the previous seventy years. Just as libertarian scholarship in the 19th century was most successful because it relied on private initiatives and private organizations, the new organizations that came into their day after WW II were successful for exactly the same reason. The implication is that the best way to promote libertarian scholarship (and possibly the only way to preserve it) is to embed it within a purely private institutional framework.

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